

Responding to the introduction of H.R. 3962, the Affordable Health Care for America Act, Congresswoman Debbie Halvorson (IL-11) released the following statement:

"Yesterday's announcement brings us one step closer to achieving access to stable, quality health care for all Americans. I have begun to read the bill, and will make a determination as to how I will vote once I have finished. Throughout the process, I have maintained that I believe the legislation must not raise the deficit, must reduce the senior prescription drug 'doughnut hole,' and must make coverage more affordable and stable. I have also stated that if the bill includes a public option it should compete on a level playing field and not be tied to Medicare. These are criteria I believe my constituents support as well. This is a bill that covers many complex issues, and I owe it to my constituents to fully understand how this bill will affect all of us.

With the upcoming vote, we have an opportunity to make our health care system more sustainable and stable for all Americans, increase access to coverage for millions, and improve coverage and affordability for those who already are covered. From what I have read thus far, this bill is a vast improvement over H.R. 3200, and I am very pleased to see several reforms that I advocated for included in the bill.

Over the past several months, I've spoken with over 25,000 constituents during telephone town halls and hundreds more in workplace town halls, open community office hours and one-on-one meetings. Over 15,000 of my constituents have written me about this important topic and received responses, and over 3,000 have responded to my online health care reform survey. I'm energized by how many of my constituents have been engaged in this issue and I look forward to continuing this discussion on how best to improve our health care system long after the final vote.

Throughout this process, I stood up and fought to ensure this bill would be deficit neutral. I stood up and fought to ensure that the cost of prescription drugs would be lowered, and I stood up and fought to allow for the purchase of individual health insurance across states lines.

I will continue to fight for my constituents and my district as the process moves along, and make sure that any reforms create a system that truly works for us all."